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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/723,819

11/24/2003

Kazumichi Yamauchi

03705/LH

9785

1933

7590

04/19/2005

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EXAMINER

BRASE, SANDRA L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2852

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

SM

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/723,819	YAMAUCHI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Sandra L. Brase	2852	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-16 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 November 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>3/22/04</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because in figure 7, “55” should be “55b” in the block labeled S3. Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as “amended.” If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled “Replacement Sheet” in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informality: on page 34, line 21, “34” should be changed to “36”.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

3. Claims 8 and 12-16 are objected to because of the following informalities. Appropriate correction is required.

On lines 1-2 of claim 8, on line 5 of claim 12, on line 5 of claim 13, on line 5 of claim 14, and on line 5 of claim 15, “the controller” should be changed to “a controller”.

On line 3 of claim 16, “to” should be deleted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 1 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yahata et al. (US 5,909,609).

6. Yahata et al. (...609) disclose an image forming apparatus comprising a toner conveyance device for conveying toner particles, comprising: a toner mixing unit having a toner introducing portion (300) to introduce toner particles, for mixing the toner particles introduced from the toner introducing portion with air to make a toner fluid (figures 24 and 29); a first conveyor (345) for receiving the toner fluid produced in the toner mixing unit and conveying the toner fluid; a toner separation unit (204) for separating the toner fluid conveyed by the first

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conveyor into air and toner particles, the toner separation unit having a toner discharging portion for discharging the separated toner particles to an outside; a second conveyor (349) for conveying the air separated by the toner separation unit back to the toner mixing unit; and a tightly closed circulation path of air, formed starting at the toner mixing unit which leads to the toner separation unit through the first conveyor and returning to the toner mixing unit again through the second conveyor (figures 24 and 29).

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 2-16 are allowed.

Prior Art

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Matheis et al. (US 5,799,227), Schoch et al. (US 5,915,154), Yahata et al. (US 5,950,055), Muramatsu et al. (US 5,953,567), Tsutsui et al. (US 6,524,762), Bares et al. (US 6,560,429), Muramatsu et al. (US 6,597,883) disclose a toner fluidization device.


Inquiry

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sandra L. Brase whose telephone number is 571-272-2131. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday and alternate Fridays.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Arthur T. Grimley, can be reached on 571-272-2136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Sandra L. Brase
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2852

April 15, 2005